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INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS OF VENEZUELAN COMMUNISM

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INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS OF VENEZUELAN COMMUNISM

The Problem

To present data on the international connections of Venezuelan Communists, [REDACTED]

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Scope and Limitations

The data in this paper have been presented under four main heads: (1) ties between the Party as a party and the international Communist movement, as evidenced by its representation at international meetings and in Soviet-oriented activities; (2) participation by leading Party members in Communist-directed labor activities on the international level; (3) links between Venezuelan front groups and Soviet-controlled international front groups; and (4) links between the Party and various individual Communist Parties (CP) in other countries, whatever the name under which they may masquerade. A fifth section provides certain information on links between Guatemalan leftists and prominent Venezuelan figures.

Although Moscow's direction and control of Communists and CP's everywhere is an incontrovertible fact--and, indeed, the acceptance of Soviet leadership (international proletarianism) is a cardinal principle of every existing CP save only that of Yugoslavia--it is not easy to document that relationship completely satisfactorily in the case of any particular Party. For the most part, the evidence is to be found in a Party's faithful adherence to the twists and turns of the Kremlin line, in the Party's denunciation of whatever Moscow denounces and praise of whatever Moscow praises, in its participation in international front activities, in its representation at international Communist meetings, etc.

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The conspiratorial nature of the Communist movement makes this reliance on inference and conclusion rather than solid fact (i.e., data showing clear lines of command and specific channels of transmission of orders and funds from Moscow to a particular Party) inevitable. It is true especially as regards Venezuela, where the Party, during its years of existence, has enjoyed legal status for only a relatively short period. As a result, the data presented in this paper tend to be incomplete and episodic in character.

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INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS OF VENEZUELAN COMMUNISM

I. Party Ties and Relationships

A. Beginnings of Venezuelan Communism

Moscow's direction and control of Communist agitation and organization in Venezuela began even before a Party had been established there. In 1927 a large number of Communist and leftist trade unionists were invited to Moscow in connection with the Xth Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. One of them was Ricardo MARTINEZ, an exiled Venezuelan, who was destined to be the principal Moscow agent of Venezuelan Communism until 1941, when he finally returned to his own country.

During the sojourn in Moscow of these leaders (Eudocio RAVINES, Armando BAZAN and Julio PORTOCARRERA of Peru, Victorio CODOVILLA of Argentina, Astrogildo PEREYRA and KARRICK of Brazil, German LIST Arzubide of Mexico, Julio Antonio MELLA of Cuba, and MARTINEZ), they participated in a meeting, also attended by Alexander Lozovsky and Humbert-Droz of the Comintern, at which plans were made regarding strategy for the spread of Communism in Latin America. 1/

After the VIth Congress of the Comintern in 1928, the Comintern's South American Secretariat was moved from Moscow to Buenos Aires. The Secretariat controlled the operations and policies of all Latin American CP's, and also supervised the activities of all peripheral organizations established by local Parties, such as branches of the International Red Aid, Communist Youth International, Anti-Imperialist League, etc. 2/

The Secretariat's first major hemispheric activity appears to have been the convoking of the First Conference of Latin American CP's, held in Buenos Aires on 1-12 June 1929. In attendance were 38 delegates representing the

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Parties of Argentina (CODOVILLA), Bolivia, Brazil (GABRINETTI), Colombia (MAHECHA), Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala (VILLALBA), Mexico (SUAREZ), Panama, Paraguay, Peru (SACO), Uruguay, and Venezuela (MARTINEZ). Also present were representatives of the Comintern, the Buenos Aires Bureau (Guralsky), the Young Communist International (Ghitor and Peters), and the CP of the United States. 3/

The exact extent of authority wielded by the Buenos Aires Bureau is not known, but it apparently was not complete. During the 1920's and early 1930's, for example, the CP's in the Caribbean area are said to have received all or part of their instructions through New York, and the US Communist leader Joseph Zach Kornfeder was active in Party affairs in Colombia and Venezuela during this period. 4/

The Venezuelan CP reportedly was first organized formally in 1931 by students who had participated in the 1928 general strike against GÓMEZ. Another exile student group headed by Gustavo MACHADO Morales formed at about the same time a Partido Revolucionario Venezolano, which became part of the Communists' continental "Anti-Imperialist League." 5/ During the early 1930's Venezuelan Communists were represented at various international gatherings, but it was not until the VIIth Comintern Congress in 1935 (which MARTINEZ and RIBAS (fnu) attended) that the Venezuelan Communist Party, previously recognized only as a "sympathetic" party, was admitted to full Comintern membership. 6/

Following the death of GÓMEZ in 1935, Venezuelan leftists of all complexions united to form the Partido Democrático Nacional (PDN). Internal dissension soon arose, however, when non-Communists led by Romulo BETANCOURT insisted that the PDN's Communist members sever all ties with Moscow. The Communists' refusal to do this led to a split in 1937, at which time the Communists left the PDN to form their own CP. Although various splits have occurred and numerous factions formed within Communist ranks since 1938, the present (1959) Partido Comunista Venezolano (PCV) can be considered to stem directly from this move.

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Throughout the years the Venezuelan Communists have faithfully followed every twist and turn of the international Communist line--perhaps the best possible indicator of their subservience to, and direction by, Moscow. As with other Parties, World War II provides the most striking illustration of this. During the early part of the war, the Venezuelan Communists denounced the conflict as "imperialist," and Communist members of the Venezuelan Students Federation withdrew rather than sign an anti-fascist manifesto which the Federation issued. But with the German attack on the Soviet Union, the Venezuelan Communists dutifully changed their attitude and became the most violent opponents of the Axis.

Another guide is the adulation accorded Stalin in his later years by Parties everywhere. Upon his death the PCV emulated other CP's in lamenting his loss. A manifesto published and circulated by the PCV's Zulia section, for example, contained such phrases as "Glory to the Great Stalin, Standard Bearer of Peace," "Long live the Glorious Party of Lenin and Stalin," "Long live the USSR," and other typical Communist slogans. 7/

B. Disunity and Unity

In 1944 a split occurred within the PCV between a faction led by Juan Bautista FUENMAYOR and one headed by Gustavo MACHADO and Luis MIQUELENA (the Machamiques) over the issue of support for the MEDINA government. Both factions sent delegations to neighboring countries, especially to Cuba, then the center of Caribbean Communist activities, to solicit the support of the international Communist movement; and both groups also besieged the newly arrived Soviet Ambassador to Caracas. Moscow's certification of the FUENMAYOR faction as the approved party in Venezuela was carried out by the publication in Vicente LOMBARDO Toledano's paper, El Popular, and in the Cuban Communist monthly Fundamentos of an "Open Letter to Venezuelan Communists," written by US Communist leader William Z. Foster, which expressed support for the FUENMAYOR group. 8/

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This split was finally healed at a Unity Conference held in Caracas in November 1946, at which the FUENMAYOR group, the independent Communists and a part of the Machamiques united to form what was recognized by the Communist movement as the PCV. As in the previous case, recognition was extended through the device of a letter written by Foster. Dated 23 June 1947, the letter was addressed to FUENMAYOR, MACHADO and Luis Emiro ARRIETA, whom it congratulated for "the historical conquest you have achieved by establishing a united Communist movement in Venezuela." 9/

Also participating in this Unity Conference were fraternal delegates of the CP's of the US, Spain, Mexico, Cuba (Partido Socialista Popular--PSP), Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Chile. 10/ One of the principal such fraternal delegates was Dionisio ENCINA Rodriguez, Secretary General of the CP of Mexico (PCM), who played an active role in bringing the divergent factions together. During his stay he lived at the home of PCV leader Hernani PORTOCARRERA.

The most important fraternal delegate, however, was Eladio Ladislao GONZALEZ Carvajal Delgado, Secretary of Relations on the National Executive Committee of the Cuban PSP, who had been in Venezuela since 9 May 1946 as the house guest of Miguel OTERO Silva, then a leader of the independent Communists. GONZALEZ reportedly had been sent to Venezuela by the Buro del Caribe, the Comintern's regional arm, for the specific purpose of bringing about unity. He appears to have been largely instrumental in bringing the conference to a successful conclusion; and before his return to Cuba, he was given a public note of appreciation and gratitude by the PCV for his assistance. 11/

C. The Caribbean Bureau

The Buro del Caribe reportedly was established at an unknown date as a regional branch of the Comintern. Its task was to coordinate the activities of the various CP's in the Caribbean area and to administer Comintern affairs, as well as to handle the distribution of Communist propaganda. Its headquarters were, successively, in Bogota, Caracas, and Havana. The Bureau was said to be directed by Gustavo MACHADO and Salvador DE LA PLAZA of Venezuela, Gilberto VIEIRA of

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Colombia, Blas ROCA of Cuba, and the general secretaries of the area Parties. MACHADO, for example, was reportedly authorized to intervene in any Communist organization in Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador. 12/

Although the Buro is believed to have become inactive by 1948, its functions had been assumed by the Circulo del Caribe, an office of the Buro Political Sud Americano with headquarters in Havana. This Buro Political is believed to have had responsibility for Soviet political, propaganda, social, labor and intelligence activities throughout Latin America. The Circulo itself had the same leadership as the defunct Buro del Caribe. 13/

The relationship of the Buro Political and its Circulo del Caribe to the Cominform is not known, but Latin American Communists appear to have had some links with that organization. One report, for example, identifies Miguel OTERO Silva as a leading Cominform agent, 14/ while Eduardo MACHADO is reported to have attended a Cominform meeting in Bucharest in February 1948. 15/

D. PCV-Block Diplomatic Contacts

As might be expected, personal contacts between Venezuelan Communists and Bloc diplomatic personnel were quite frequent during the period when Venezuela maintained diplomatic relations with certain Bloc countries. Similarly, these Communists, during their years of exile, maintained relations with the Bloc diplomats accredited to the country in which they were residing. The MACHADO brothers, for example, are known to have had extremely close contacts with Bloc diplomats in Mexico. 16/ While such contacts could possibly be explained away in large part as the normal social association of persons sharing similar political ideas, some of these contacts are known to have been more than this.

Two important meetings of high-ranking Communists were held in Caracas on 17-18 February 1948, attended by Pedro BEROES (PCV member and an activist of the Instituto Cultural

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Venezolano-Sovietico--ICVS), Victor GUERERE (liaison between the ICVS and the Soviet Embassy), Rodolfo QUINTERO, Salvador DE LA PLAZA, Juan FUENMAYOR, Gustavo MACHADO, Hector MARCANO, Jan Drohojowski (Polish Minister to Venezuela), Lev Krylov (Second Secretary and Cultural Attache of the Soviet Embassy), and Jorge Martin BEC (a Hungarian of Spanish citizenship and a traveling Communist agent). The meeting discussed BEC's plans to gain control of Hungarian organizations throughout Latin America as well as the possibility of taking measures to insure the inclusion of a large percentage of Communists among the Czechs, Hungarians, Poles and Yugoslavs brought to Venezuela as immigrants. 17/

In the summer of 1952 the Venezuelan Government severed relations with Bloc countries, charging that the Soviet and Polish embassies had been involved in shipments of contraband arms received by Venezuelan Communists from Czechoslovakia. The government further charged that the Soviet Embassy in Mexico had been cooperating openly by giving financial aid to Venezuelan Communist groups plotting the overthrow of the government. 18/

Following the break PCV leader Pompeyo MARQUEZ published in the clandestine PCV organ Cuadernos de Educacion an article in which he lamented that "the severing of relations this past June with the Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak People's Republic severely hindered the clandestine work of the Party."19/ This could only be interpreted as a tacit admission that the Bloc embassies had, in fact, been secretly aiding the PCV as the government charged.

E. PCV and Soviet Espionage

Soviet intelligence activities in Venezuela appear to be carried out both by the PCV as a party and by individual members. Jesus FARIA, the present (1959) Secretary General, was

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reported (but not confirmed) to have been appointed in May 1944 as chief of all Communist intelligence activities in Venezuela. Gustavo MACHADO, nominal head of the PCV and one of the three members of its National Secretariat, was also reportedly recruited by Russian Intelligence (NKGB) in 1944 in Bogota through the agency of his first wife, Maria Ida LUCAS de Machado, also an intelligence agent. 20/

During its underground period the PCV continued to serve Soviet intelligence. According to one report, a PCV Politburo meeting was held at Maracay on 28 February 1953 to discuss instructions brought from Moscow by an unidentified European, who also attended the meeting. These instructions included orders for the PCV to send to Moscow (1) a quarterly report on Venezuelan policies towards the U. S., (2) a quarterly report on oil and iron production, with figures, (3) a technical and graphical study on the dredging of the Orinoco River and progress of the construction of Puerto Ordaz, (4) a cartographic study of the Orinoco and its tributaries and of the Caribbean coast, and (5) studies of plans and measures to foster oil and iron nationalization. 21/ During this same period the Pro-Peace movement in Venezuela was also reported to be collecting intelligence for the Soviets. 22/

At the present time Eduardo MACHADO is believed to be the key Soviet agent in Venezuela. During his exile in Mexico, he, as well as his brother Gustavo, was in constant contact with Jacobo HURWITZ Zender, a long-time Comintern agent. 23/ On 26 April 1957, for example, he requested Juan Jose MEZA Amador, a pro-Communist Nicaraguan exile, to provide him with "all the latest information" on Nicaragua "to send to Prague." 24/

F. Conference of Northern Zone Communist Parties

In November 1957 Latin American Communists who were in Moscow to attend the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution met under the chairmanship of the CPSU's Latin American specialist Sivolov (probably Sivobolov), and approved an action program calling for increased coordination and fraternal support among Latin American Parties.

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Sivolov called for a "Conference of the North," and preparations for such a meeting were undertaken immediately after the return to Mexico of top Cuban and Mexican Party leaders. A PCV offer to hold the meeting in Venezuela was not accepted. 25/

The Conference of Northern Zone Communist Parties was held at Cuernavaca, Mexico, on 26-27 March 1958. Present at the meeting were Dionisio ENCINA, Juan Pablo SAINZ Aguilar and J. Encarnacion VALDEZ Ochoa of Mexico; Hugo BARRIOS Klee, Victor Manuel GUTIERREZ and Carlos ALVARADO Jerez of Guatemala; Rodolfo GUZMAN Rodriguez of Costa Rica; Jorge ARIAS Gomez of El Salvador; Eduardo MACHADO of Venezuela; Joaquin ORDOQUI, Nilo Risquet de Jesus VALDEZ Saldanas and Carlos Rafael RODRIGUEZ of Cuba; and Jose Rafael HILL Sanchez of Panama. The CP's of Honduras, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic and Haiti were not represented, although both the Nicaraguan and Honduran Parties sent written reports.

According to HILL Sanchez' report to the Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (CEN) of the Partido del Pueblo (PDP), the expenses of the meeting were paid almost entirely by the CP's of Cuba and Venezuela. The meeting agreed on the need for increased inter-party contacts and for the larger Parties to aid the small ones. To this end it voted to establish an office in Mexico to which each of the Northern Zone CP's could send Party reports and observations for circulation, without comment, to the other Parties. All copies of reports presented to the conference were destroyed except one which was retained by ENCINA for (probably) forwarding to the Soviet Union. 26/

G. Other PCV-Soviet Contacts

On 25 May 1958, Jesus FARIA and Eduardo MACHADO left Caracas for Mexico City where Machado met with Georgiy Bobrov, the motion picture representative in the Soviet Embassy's commercial office. Faria also visited the Embassy. Both men also visited the home of PCM Secretary General ENCINA, made contact with Roberto BEREDECIO, a Bolivian Communist with various international contacts in Mexico, and met with numerous Guatemalan and Mexican Party leaders.

The two men left Mexico on 1 June for Moscow, where they reportedly were scheduled to report to Soviet officials on conditions in Venezuela and to present the PCV's recommendations on actions Moscow should take to secure reestablishment of diplomatic and commercial relations with Venezuela. 27/

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MACHADO returned to Caracas in about a month, but FARIA did not return until 10 September, having spent time in Czechoslovakia, a month's medical rest in the Soviet Union, and a month in China as a guest of the Chinese CP. 28/

In September 1958, members of a PCV cell in El Tigre, State of Anzoategui, were informed that a group of members were currently being trained in the USSR and would soon return to Venezuela. After their return, the PCV would begin a campaign to achieve re-establishment of Venezuelan-Soviet diplomatic relations. 29/

During an interview in late October with a correspondent of the West German magazine Der Spiegel, Gustavo MACHADO said that he would be invited to Moscow for the next CPSU congress and that although he would pay his way there, Moscow would stand the expense of his return trip. (Together with Hernani PORTOCARRERA, MACHADO, under the pseudonym of Felipe BOLANOS, also attended the XIXth CPSU Congress in December 1952 as the PCV's official representative. 30/) He also stated that the PCV was being used by Moscow as an experiment in self-sufficiency so that the PCV at that moment was not receiving any outside financial help, 31/ thus clearly acknowledging that Moscow had previously been assisting the PCV financially.

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II. International Communist Labor Ties

A. Confederacion Sindical Latino Americana

From the beginnings of Venezuelan Communism, the labor movement has been a constant source of contact between Venezuelan Communists and international Communism. The Latin American trade unionists who were in Moscow in 1927 in connection with the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution (See Section IA), met and approved preliminary plans for establishing the first hemispheric labor organization. The meeting, which was presided over by Alexander Lozovsky, then head of the Red International of Labor Unions (RILU, or Profintern), selected Ricardo MARTINEZ of Venezuela as the resident Latin American representative at RILU's Moscow headquarters. 32/

The actual manifesto convoking a Latin American labor congress was addressed "To the Workers' Organizations of Latin America and to the Proletariat in General," and was issued by a second meeting of Latin American trade unionists held in Moscow in April 1928. Those present signed the manifesto as representatives of Communist-controlled labor organizations in Mexico, Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Venezuela (Union Obrera Revolucionaria).

The conference met in Montevideo in May 1928 attended by Communist representatives from 15 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico (David A. SIQUEIROS, Elias BARRIOS, Samuel RODRIGUEZ Cerilla), Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (MARTINEZ, representing the Agrupaciones Sindicales Revolucionarias). The result of the meeting was the formal establishment of the Confederacion Sindical Latino Americana (CSLA) as the hemispheric affiliate of RILU. MARTINEZ served as a member of CSLA's Secretariat or General Council as well as CSLA's representative on RILU's Executive Committee. 33/

B. Confederacion de Trabajadores de America Latina

The CSLA was never very effective and it ceased to exist in 1936. On 8 September 1938, a hemispheric labor conference was convoked by Mexico's Vicente LOMBARDO Toledano, which was

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attended by 37 delegates from 12 countries. Out of the conference emerged a new Communist front organization, Confederacion de Trabajadores de America Latina (CTAL), which is today the hemispheric branch of the Moscow-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). The 1938 meeting elected LOMBARDO Secretary General of the new organization, a post he still holds. 34/

Aside from the Communistic nature of its affiliated unions and of its officers and members, CTAL's role as an integral part of the international Communist movement is evidenced by the fact that it was a major subject of discussion at the Conference of Northern Zone CP's (see Section IF). That conference considered, as the second item on its agenda, a report prepared by Lazaro PENA, a Cuban official of CTAL and WFTU. After discussion of the report, the conference decided that (1) CTAL headquarters should continue to be in Mexico; (2) CTAL, despite its faults, must continue as the focus of the revolutionary union movement in opposition to ORIT, the hemispheric arm of ICFTU; and (3) there must be more discussion and coordination among Latin American CP's in order to revitalize and strengthen the CTAL. 35/

In Venevuela the leading affiliate has been the Federacion de Trabajadores del Distrito Federal y Estado Miranda (FTDFEM), controlled by the Black (dissident) Communist group, Partido Revolucionario del Proletariado (Comunista)--PRPc. Rodolfo QUINTERO, long the leading member of FTDFEM, represented that organization at CTAL conferences in 1946, 1948 and 1953 and, at the latter (4th Congress, Santiago, Chile), was elected to a 3-year term on CTAL's Central Committee. QUINTERO also has attended WFTU meetings in 1951 (Budapest), 1953 (Vienna--along with Luis CIANO Cerezo) and 1954, and has served as a member of the administrative committee of WFTU's Trade Union International of Oil, Chemical and Allied Workers. After the 1951 congress in Budapest, he toured Hungary as a guest of the Hungarian trade unions. 36/

As an FTDFEM leader and head of its largest affiliate, the Waiters' Union, Rafael BRACCA has, like QUINTERO, been associated with WFTU and CTAL. In March 1953 he attended the CTAL congress in Santiago, and in September 1955 he was present at the 2nd International Conference of Food and Tobacco Industry Workers, Hotel, Cafe and Restaurant Employees, which was held under WFTU auspices at Sofia. In 1957 he was a member of the WFTU General Council, with Jose Rosario DIAZ serving as Venezuela's deputy member. 37/

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In 1957 Oscar T. MERCHANT, then president of FTDFEM, was the Venezuelan delegate to WFTU's 4th Congress, held in Leipzig on 4-14 October. Before the Congress, Rodrigo ROJAS Andrade, a Chilean Communist labor leader, was delegated by WFTU-CTAL to visit Venezuela and Colombia to arouse interest in the congress. 38/

In 1953, the FTDFEM maintained contact with the WFTU through Enrique AGUERO Gorriin, a Caracas lawyer. AGUERO would send correspondence to his brother Leonardo in Milan, while WFTU correspondence for QUINTERO or FTDFEM would be sent by Leonardo to his brother or mother. 39/

C. Jesus Faria

The connections of Venezuelan Communism with the international Communist labor movement are well illustrated by the career of Jesus FARIA, the present PCV Secretary General and long its specialist on union affairs. FARIA attended CTAL congresses in 1942 (Mexico City), 1944 (Cali, Colombia), 1948 (Mexico City), and 1950 (Montevideo). At the latter meeting (27 March-1 April), LOMBARDO announced that the CTAL had approved a plan for creating regional committees; and the Caribbean Regional Committee, covering Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Venezuela, was placed under the direction of FARIA together with Lazaro PENA and Faustino CALCENES of Cuba. 40/

At CTAL's 1953 congress in Santiago, FARIA, although confined to a Venezuelan jail at the time, was elected a member of the CTAL Executive Committee. He managed to send a message to the congress, in which he expounded a straight Moscow line: denunciation of Yankee imperialistic exploitation of Venezuela through Standard Oil Company and condemnation of America's war-mongering policies. 41/ Earlier, in 1945, FARIA had been sent by the MEDINA government as an observer to an ILO conference in Paris; he took advantage of the trip to attend a WFTU conference in Toulouse on 28 October. 42/

In 1949 FARIA made the pilgrimage to Moscow as a guest of the Soviet trade union organization. There he attended the Xth Soviet Trade Union Congress, to which he delivered an attack on "North American Imperialism." Radio Moscow, on 13 May 1949, beamed to Latin America part of a FARIA article entitled "North American Imperialism in Venezuela," which castigated the ruling

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military junta as a lackey of the U. S. and which apparently was an adaptation of his speech. During his stay in Moscow, he sent back to Tribuna Popular, the PCV organ, a series of articles relating the glories of the Soviet Union and the enviable position of the Soviet worker. 43/

On his return trip FARIA visited Sofia to attend the funeral of Georgi Dimitrov, and also participated in a WFTU meeting in Milan, where he was named one of three members of a committee (the others were from the USSR and Rumania) to prepare and disseminate a report on the accomplishments of oil workers throughout the world. FARIA later became Latin America director of the Trade Union International of Chemical, Oil and Allied Workers, whose organization was decided upon at the Milan meeting. 44/

The previous year (1948) FARIA had led a delegation of Venezuelan Communist (Theodoro GUZMAN Landaeta, Manuel TABORDA, Maximo GUTIERREZ, Porfirio MARVAL, and Antonio GARCIA) to the Congress of Latin American Petroleum Workers, held in Tampico, Mexico, on 22-26 September. The Congress named FARIA a member of the Committee for the Defense of Latin American Petroleum Workers. 45/

During his long imprisonment from May 1950 until January 1958, FARIA served international Communism well as a symbol of martyrdom and a subject for propaganda. The CTAL was especially active in this regard, and in 1954 LOMBARDO issued orders to all affiliates that December 1954 was to be observed as "Crusade to Free Jesus Faria" month. The idea reportedly originated in the headquarters of WFTU's Trade Union International of Chemical, Oil and Allied Workers. Radio Moscow dedicated various radio programs to him (for example, on 5 July 1955). In late 1956 the WFTU Executive Council, meeting in Sofia, approved a resolution "to send messages demanding the release from jail of Faria" to the Venezuelan Government. 46/

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III. Front Organizations

A. Anti-Imperialist League

The Anti-Imperialist League was founded by the Anti-Imperialist Congress, which met in Brussels in February 1927 at the call of Willy Muenzenberg, the well-known Comintern agent. The Latin American delegates included Gustavo MACHADO, as well as Julio Antonio MELLA (Cuba) and Eudocio RAVINES (Peru). A Continental Committee of the League was set up in Mexico with MELLA as its prime mover and MACHADO as a member. 47/

Following the Comintern's Vith Congress in 1928, at which a resolution praising the SANDINO revolt in Nicaragua was adopted, Latin American Communists associated with the League organized a "Hands Off Nicaragua" Committee (Manos Fuera de Nicaragua--Mafuenic), which undertook to raise funds for SANDINO. The \$1,000 that was raised was sent to SANDINO by means of MACHADO. 48/

B. Venezuelan-Soviet Cultural Institute

The Instituto Cultural Venezolano-Sovietico (ICVS) was organized on 24 April 1946 and came to an end on 13 June 1952 when it was closed by police a few hours after Venezuela broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. During its existence, ICVS functioned primarily as a channel for the distribution of Communist propaganda. Its Boletin de Informacion reportedly was published by the Soviet Embassy. The Institute also distributed Cultura Sovietica, published by the Instituto de Intercambio Cultural Mexicano-Ruso in Mexico City. 49/ In 1948 the Soviet Embassy was said also to be subsidizing through the ICVS the then pro-Communist Caracas daily tabloid Ultimas Noticias. 50/

Throughout its lifetime, the Institute's leading figure and director was Carlos Augusto LEON Arocha, who was then and is today a prominent member of the PCV. LEON reportedly was paid for his services by the Soviet Embassy and acted as go-between and front man in matters concerning ICVS for Lev Krylov, Soviet cultural attache in Caracas until 1948. 51/

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LEON has traveled abroad both as a PCV agent and as a representative of other front groups. In 1952 he visited Prague and reportedly continued on to Moscow to attend the World Economic Conference (April 1952) as a delegate of the Venezuelan Pro-Peace movement. 52/ In 1953 he attended both Stalin's funeral and the 3rd World Youth Congress in Bucharest, 25-30 July. During this trip behind the Iron Curtain he maintained contact with the West through Jonas MILLAN Boadas, who also attended the youth congress. In Moscow LEON is said to have met with CPSU cultural officials and also persons in charge of Communist agitation in the Americas, to whom he explained the serious financial and tactical problems then facing the PCV. 53/

A second prominent member of ICVS was Gabriel Oscar BRACHO Montiel, who served as its last president. A well-known painter, humorist, editor-publisher and odontologist from the State of Zulia, BRACHO, a member of the PCV, was also a founding member of the Pro-Peace Committee, which he represented at the Continental Cultural Congress in Santiago, Chile, 27 April 1953. In late 1952 or early 1953 BRACHO reportedly had contacts with the now defunct Peruvian pro-Communist magazine 1953. 54/

Eduardo FRANCIS, a sculptor and painter, was another active member. He assisted in the organization of the Institute and, in 1950, served as one of its officers. In January 1947, he reportedly was given 10,150 bolivars by Krylov to be used in financing union activities.

FRANCIS was expelled from Venezuela in 1929, at which time he went to Moscow where he attended various Party schools. Later he was sent by the CPSU to various European capitals to study Communist agitation and sabotage methods. When he returned to Venezuela in 1936 he held membership in both the PCV and CPSU. He returned to Moscow upon being exiled a second time (date unknown) and, during World War II, reportedly served as the CPSU's official Spanish translator. On his return to Venezuela again following the October 1945 coup d'etat, he allegedly brought with him from Moscow instructions for the PCV. In the USSR, where he has spent a total of 13 years, FRANCIS belongs, in addition to the CPSU, to the Association of Sculptors of the Soviet Union and the Artists' Cooperative of the Soviet Union. 55/

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C. Pro-Peace Committee

The Comité Venezolano Por la Paz y la Democracia, an affiliate of the World Peace Council, was founded on 17 November 1948 by General Jose Rafael GABALDON, Mario BRICENO Irigorri, Jose Antonio MARTURET, Lucila PALACIOS, Rafael ANGARITA Arvelo, and Luis VILLALBA Villalba. Other prominent members are Miguel OTERO Silva, Luis Esteban REY, Vicente and Jose GERBASI, Antonio MARQUEZ Salas, Carlos IRAZABAL, Isidoro VALLES, Eduardo GALLEGOS Mancera, Jose Maria SANCHEZ Mijares (its Secretary General), Gabriel BRACHO, and Dr. J. F. REYES Baena (ICVS Vice President from September 1949 until its closure in May 1952). 56/ Most of the persons mentioned are also prominent PCV members, although a few are only fellow travelers.

One such fellow traveler is GABALDON, the Committee's president. In 1954, he was invited to visit the Soviet Union for two months, according to El Nacional of 4 June 1954. In 1958, together with LEON Arocha and SANCHEZ Mijares, he headed the 20 Venezuelan delegates to the Stockholm Disarmament Congress, 16-22 July. 57/

In February 1953, a source, basing his remarks on information obtained by him from SANCHEZ Mijares, claimed that the Committee was acting as a Soviet intelligence organization, furnishing Moscow with such information as it might be requested to collect. According to the source, the Soviets were using the Venezuelan group, as well as similar organizations in other countries, to supplement information obtained through local CP's. The information thus collected was believed to be channeled to Moscow through the Paris headquarters of the Pro-Peace Movement or through the Mexican Committee. The source claimed that the Venezuelan committee had already furnished Moscow with papers prepared by such figures as Federico BRITO Figueroa, GALLEGOS Mancera, LEON Arocha, IRAZABAL, OTERO Silva, Humberto RIVAS Mijares, Vicente GERBASI, Augusto MARQUEZ Canizales, and Dr. Felix AGUERO. 58/

D. Democratic Lawyers Association

The Venezuelan Association of Democratic Lawyers was organized in Caracas on 1 September 1949 as an affiliate of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL). Its members

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consist of a handful of lawyers controlled by the PCV. As of 1953 its President was Octavio ANDRADE Delgado and its Secretary of Relations Pedro BARRIOS Guzman, both of them also members of the PCV's National Labor Commission for the Federal District. 59/

One prominent Association member is Dr. Arturo CARDOZO, also active in ICVS and the Pro-Peace Committee and reportedly a PCV member. CARDOZO was a delegate to the International Jurists Congress in Rio de Janeiro in November 1952 and a signer in January 1952 of the "Convocatoria" for the American Continental Congress for Peace. 60/

E. Youth Groups

The Liga de Juventud Trabajadora de Venezuela (LJTV) was organized in 1952 as a PCV front group. A 4-page open letter addressed to "Young Petroleum Workers of all Countries" and sent to contacts in Bogota and Buenos Aires indicated that the LJTV was probably associated with the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY). It also corresponded with the International Preparatory Committee of the Conference for the Defense of the Rights of Youth (Vienna). 61/

Also associated with the WFDY is the Juventud Comunista (JCV), established in 1947 as the official youth arm of the PCV. One of its early leaders, Guillermo GARCIA Ponce (now PCV representative on the Junta Patriotica and a PCV Central Committee member), was a delegate to the Latin American Youth Conferences held in Mexico City in 1943 and 1948. These conferences reportedly were sponsored by the WFDY and its associated youth organizations, the International Union of Students and the Conference of American Youth. 62/ Another JCV leader, Juvenal HERRERA, was a delegate to the 3rd World Festival for Youth, held in Berlin in 1951. 63/

Jonas MILLAN Boadas, a member of JCV's National Executive Committee until his departure, left Caracas for Switzerland on 2 April 1953. In July, together with LEON Arocha, he attended the Youth Congress in Bucharest. MILLAN reportedly went to Europe as a PCV emissary with the task of maintaining liaison with the Cominform. He was also to maintain contact with Ricardo GONZALEZ, a Venezuelan student then living in Geneva, who was serving as a PCV liaison agent in Europe for the procurement of propaganda materials. MILLAN's mail contact in Venezuela was said to be Dr. Eduardo GALLEGOS Mancera. 64/

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IV. Ties With Individual Communist Parties

In addition to the previously cited contacts between Venezuelan Communists and various components of the international Communist movement, some data can also be adduced to show specific contacts with individual CP's in various countries. The data available are not sufficiently complete or conclusive to reveal the full extent of these relationships, but they do provide additional evidence of the PCV's links abroad.

Brazil: In 1953 a PCV leader disclosed that the CP of Brazil (PCB), which he described as having lots of funds, was showing a willingness to aid the then outlawed PCV. According to him, PCV members were being invited to participate in PCB activities, and the PCV was expecting to receive material support from the Brazilian Party. 65/ (See also Section VB.)

Chile: The Chilean CP was reported in 1950 to be using regular mail sent to various cover addresses in communicating with other Latin American CP's. The known cover address for Venezuela was: Miguel OTERO Silva, El Nacional, Caracas. 66/

China: Representatives from 10 Latin American countries were present at the 8th Congress of the Chinese CP in September 1956. Delegates from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Ecuador, and Uruguay addressed the Congress, while fraternal messages were read from the CP's of Brazil, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Paraguay (although no delegates were present), Bolivia and Venezuela. 67/ During 1958 PCV Secretary General Jesus FARIA spent a month in China as a guest of the Chinese CP. 68/

Colombia: A direct and close link between the PCV and the Colombian CP (PCC) exists in the person of PCV leader Gustavo MACHADO, who became an honorary member of the PCC during his exile there. 69/ During the 1948 oil strike in Colombia, the Communist-controlled Venezuelan Federation of Labor secretly sent the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Colombia 11,000 pesos through Exito Films, a Bogota distributor for Soviet Artkino Films, which MACHADO and his brother Eduardo founded in July 1944. 70/

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Between January and mid-May 1958, Guillermo VARGAS Saavedra of the PCC went to Venezuela to aid the PCV and to act as a liaison channel between it and his own party. Later in the year, the PCV officially invited Gilberto VIEIRA White, PCC Secretary General, to visit Caracas. 71/

Cuba: PCV relations with the Cuban CP (i.e., PSP) have been quite extensive, as previous references in this paper have indicated. The earliest contact probably dates from 1924 when Gustavo MACHADO, then working in Cuba for a sugar company, founded Venezuela Libre in association with Jose Antonio MELLA, Ruben MARTINEZ Villen and Juan MARINELLO. 72/ Later, it will be recalled, MACHADO was again associated with MELLA on the Continental Committee of the Anti-Imperialist League (see Section IIIA).

On 8 January 1947, Pompeyo MARQUEZ, then PCV Financial Secretary, arrived in Havana; during his stay, he was a house guest of GONZALEZ Carvajal. 73/ When Francisco OLIVO and Juan PELLECECER arrived in Havana on 8 January 1952 as emissaries of the General Committee of the PCV, then in exile in Mexico, they were guests of honor at a luncheon given by the PSP. 74/

Ecuador: In May 1958, Enrique GIL Gilbert, Secretary General of the Guayas Provincial Committee of the Ecuadoran CP (PCE), received a letter from the PCV, announcing the shipment to the PCE of a number of copies of the latest issue of Tribuna Popular. The PCE was requested to use the address "Manuel Saez, Apartado 5335, Este, Caracas", in writing to the PCV. 75/

France: Salvador DE LA PLAZA, long a prominent Venezuelan Communist, whom Manuel OTERO Silva once described as the "most important Communist in the country," helped to organize a Communist group in France in 1923. Later he worked on behalf of local parties in the U. S. (1926) and Cuba (1927). Forced to leave Cuba, he went to Moscow where he spent many years, broadcasting daily over a Moscow radio on the necessity and desirability of Communism in Latin America. 76/

Manuel Antonio CABALLERO Agüero was, according to Jesus FARIA, Chief of the Latin American Section of the French CP during his exile. Today he is a staff member of the Caracas paper Elite and is slated to take over publication of Joven Guardia, a Communist youth magazine. 77/

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Italy: In February 1958 FARIA and Gustavo MACHADO reportedly asked the Italian CP to place some trained cadres at the disposal of the PCV. This request apparently was granted since a PCV meeting on 28 September 1958, called to discuss preparations against a possible future military coup, was attended by an Italian who claimed to be a veteran of the Maquis. A later report on PCV plans to organize a guerrilla force to combat coups identified one of the organizers of this force as (fnu) Mantovani (pseudonym: Ulises), who was also described as a former member of the Maquis. 78/

Mexico: The center of PCV activity after the party was outlawed by the PEREZ regime was in Mexico City, where many PCV personalities went into exile. These included both Gustavo and Eduardo MACHADO, whose entrance into Mexico was sponsored by LOMBARDO Toledano and Diego RIVERA. 79/ The MACHADO-LOMBARDO friendship later cooled because of PCV resentment over the CTAL's refusal to break off relations with labor leaders still in Venezuela who were cooperating with the PEREZ regime. For his part, LOMBARDO, in July 1952, accused Gustavo of plotting with Luis Carlos PRESTES (Brazil), Salvador OCAMPO (Chile) and GONZALEZ Carvajal (Cuba) to replace him as head of the CTAL with Cuban Communist labor leader Lazaro PENA. 80/

In May 1954 the Venezuelan Government learned that the PCM was arranging meetings between PCV exiles and J. Encarnacion PEREZ Gaytan, PCM leader, who had recently returned from the USSR with "precise instructions for the functioning of Communist groups in Venezuela." 81/

In January 1955, Gustavo MACHADO was reported to have become a member of the board of directors of a committee formed in Mexico City to aid Communist political refugees, similar to the Socorro Rojo Internacional which had existed in Guatemala and Cuba. Serving with him were LOMBARDO and ENCINA (Mexico), Horacio FUENTES and GONZALEZ Carvajal (Cuba), and Eduardo MORA Valverde (Secretary General of the Costa Rican CP, i. e., Partido Vanguardia Popular). 82/

In mid-1958, Editorial Popular, A. C., a bookstore owned and operated by the PCM, received an order for 2,000 copies of Como Ser un Buen Comunista by Liu Shao-chi from Distribuidora Magrija of Caracas, whose intermediary in Mexico City was Gustavo MACHADO. 83/

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Panama: During the PEREZ ban on the PCV, many exiled members enjoyed the hospitality of the PDP. For example, at a meeting of the Party's CEN on 24 August 1955, PDP leader Miguel PORCELL introduced Luis NAVARRETE, JCV member; Luis Emiro ARRIETA Ugarte, PCV Politburo member; and Yolanda E. VILLAPEREDA Tavar, member of the JCV and of the Venezuelan Preparatory Committee of the International Conference for the Defense of the Rights of Youth (Vienna, March 1953). CEN gave ARRIETA two addresses to send to the PCV, which its members, upon arriving in Panama, could use to contact the PDP. 84/

At a later CEN meeting on 1 November 1955, Nicolas COLORADO Tovar, introduced as a member of PCV's National Directorate, told the CEN that the PCV had decided to assign a permanent representative to Panama. The PDP agreed to pay for this agent's room and board. 85/ The PDP also exerted itself to get jobs for PCV exiles who came to Panama. 86/

In early 1958, it was reported that the PCV, as well as the CPSU, had promised material support to the PDP. HILL Sanchez, PDP Secretary for Organization, who attended the Conference of Northern Zone CP's (see Section IF), later informed CEN that he had discussed the matter with Eduardo MACHADO, the PCV delegate to the Conference, and that the latter promised that the PCV would provide a printing press. According to HILL, MACHADO said that the PCV would conduct a fund-raising campaign among its members in this connection. 87/

On 1 August 1958, Ruben Dario SOUZA, PDP Secretary General, was visited by Jose Vicente IRO and Reina Mercedes GOMEZ, both PCV members, who informed SOUZA that they were on their way to Buenos Aires for 6-months' training at the Communist cadre school there. 88/

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V. Guatemalan Leftist Contacts with Venezuelans

A. Juan Jose Arevalo

While in Mexico City in late May 1958, Eduardo MACHADO and Jesus FARIA told Victor Manuel GUTIERREZ, exiled Guatemalan labor leader, that they could arrange residence in Venezuela for Jacobo ARBENZ and Juan Jose AREVALO, the two former Presidents of Guatemala then living in exile in Montevideo. 89/ Very shortly thereafter, Juan David GARCIA Bacca, Dean of the School of Humanities of Caracas' Central University and reportedly an associate of Mexican and Panamanian Communists, offered professorships to both men, although AREVALO had already informed GARCIA that he was dubious about going to Venezuela. 90/

Apparently nothing came of this offer; but in October it was reported that AREVALO had been invited to lecture at the University by a group of professors and that he was inclined to accept. However, an official of the Venezuelan Ministry of the Interior stated on 14 November that AREVALO would not be permitted to enter the country. 91/

In the past, AREVALO has also had contacts with Accion Democratica leaders. During his tenure as Provisional President of Venezuela, Romulo BETANCOURT was decorated by AREVALO (1946) with Guatemala's Grand Cross of the Order of Quetzal. 92/ In January 1951, Romulo GALLEGOS, former Venezuelan President, visited Guatemala as an official guest of the government as the result of an invitation extended by AREVALO. 93/

BETANCOURT was also associated with AREVALO in the Inter-American Conference for Democracy and Freedom, organized by BETANCOURT, Jose FIGUERES and Juan BOSCH, and held in Havana on 12-14 May 1950. 94/ In early 1951, BETANCOURT reportedly was plotting with AREVALO, FIGUERES and Carlos PRIO Socarras to effect a rebellion in Venezuela. BETANCOURT was said to have purchased from the Argentine Government through the intermediary of the Guatemalan Government \$1,000,000 worth of arms to be used to restore GALLEGOS to the Venezuelan Presidency. Part of the arms were said to be stored in Guatemala and the remainder on a FIGUERES property near San Jose. 95/

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Another Venezuelan non-Communist leftist having contacts with AREVALO is General GABALDON, head of the Pro-Peace Committee. In October 1957, at least, GABALDON was corresponding with Arevalo, although the extent of this correspondence is not known. 96/

B. Jose Manuel Fortuny

At the Conference of Northern Zone CP's, the PCV through its delegate, Eduardo MACHADO, agreed to a proposal that Jose Manuel FORTUNY, exiled Guatemalan Communist leader, should go to Venezuela from Moscow. 97/ During their subsequent visit to Mexico City in late May, MACHADO and Jesus FARIA told Guatemalan exile leaders that Bernardo ALVARADO Monzon and his wife, Irma CHAVEZ de Alvarado, as well as FORTUNY, were to be invited to Venezuela. MACHADO promised that upon their arrival, the PCV would concern itself with their security, procurement of new documentation, and assistance to go elsewhere if they should so desire. GUTIERREZ told MACHADO and FARIA to work out travel arrangements with FORTUNY and the ALVARADOS without delay once they reached Moscow. 98/

In early June the three Guatemalans were reported to be preparing to leave the USSR for Venezuela, and FORTUNY at least actually did so. He appears to have gone from Moscow to Rio de Janeiro. On 7 August he traveled from there to Montevideo in accordance with instructions from Mexico, relayed through Mario Fiorani, an Italian Communist, that he go to the Uruguayan capital to contact PCV leader Eduardo GALLEGOS Mancera. GALLEGOS gave him a letter of recommendation to an official of the Venezuelan Embassy in Rio, as well as instructions to contact Jorge AMADO, a Stalin Prize winner, who would help him during his stay in Brazil. FORTUNY returned to Rio on 31 August, and was arrested there on 3 October for having false papers. 99/

During questioning by Brazilian police, FORTUNY admitted his contacts with AMADO and said that they resulted from advice given him by GALLEGOS and Juan Bernardo ARISMENDI (also a Venezuelan Communist). In FORTUNY's notebook were found the names and addresses of GALLEGOS and of Osvaldo TREJO, First Secretary of the Venezuelan Embassy in Rio and presumably the addressee of GALLEGOS' letter of recommendation. 100/

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This episode was not FORTUNY's first contact with Venezuelan leftists. In 1950, for example, he was a delegate to the World Peace Congress, which Miguel OTERO Silva, Caracas publisher, and Victor MARTINEZ, an oil worker, also attended. 101/ Moreover, just before that congress, the Paris Conference of the World Committee of Partisans for Peace appointed delegations to visit various countries. The delegation named to visit Mexico and Guatemala consisted of FORTUNY, Chilean poet Pablo NERUDA, Jose CARILLO Garcia (Vice President of the International Teachers Federation), and General GABALDON. 102/

C. Other Contacts

In March 1953, Humberto BARTOLI and J. A. MEDINA Sanchez, exiled Union Republicana Democratica (URD) deputies from Venezuela, attended in Guatemala City one of a series of round-table discussions arranged by Jaime DIAZ Rozzotto, Secretary General of the Presidency (i. e., to Jacobo ARBENZ) and of the Partido de Renovacion Nacional (PRN); Fernando DE LEON Porras, PRN deputy and First Secretary of the Guatemalan Congress; and Julio ESTRADA de la Hoz, former President of the Congress and a Deputy of the Partido de Accion Revolucionaria. The Guatemalans present at the meeting attended by BARTOLI and MEDINA were Carlos GONZALEZ Orellana, Secretary of Publicity for Arbenz, Luis F. GALICH, and Julio SALVADO, director of Guatemala's Neuropsychiatric Hospital. 103/

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APPENDIX I

ABBREVIATIONS USED

AD	- Accion Democratica
CEN	- Comité Ejecutivo Nacional (Panama)
CP	- Communist Party
CPSU	- Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSLA	- Confederacion Sindical Latino Americana
CTAL	- Conferderacion de Trabajadores de America Latina
FTDFEM	- Federacion de Trabajadores del Distrito Federal y Estado Miranda
IADL	- International Association of Democratic Lawyers
ICFTU	- International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICVS	- Instituto Cultural Venezolano-Sovietico
ILO	- International Labor Organization
JCV	- Juventud Comunista de Venezuela
LJTV	- Liga de Juventud Trabajadora de Venezuela
ORIT	- Inter-American Regional Labor Organization
PCB	- Partido Comunista do Brasil
PCC	- Partido Comunista de Colombia
PCE	- Partido Comunista del Ecuador
PCM	- Partido Comunista Mexicano
PCV	- Partido Comunista Venezolano

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PDN - Partido Democratico Nacional
PDP - Partido del Pueblo (Panama)
PRN - Partido de Renovacion Nacional (Guatemala)
PRPc - Partido Revolucionario del Proletariado (Comunista)
PSP - Partido Socialista Popular (Cuba)
RILU - Red International of Labor Unions
WFDY - World Federation of Democratic Youth
WFTU - World Federation of Trade Unions

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